

Blood of Me, part 2

by Courtney

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Distribution: If you post my fics already then yes. If you don't and you want to then just ask.

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There's a power when you're near me In our heads or in our bones I
know nothing but I'm guessing When we die we're not alone Maybe
there's a light that's always on Maybe we're not only human Maybe
there's a light that's always on And we're not only human . . .

--Not Only Human by Heather Nova

"Tessie, wake up," Jake Carter said to his best friend. Tess mumbled something in half-sleep as she began to rouse. Finally, her eyes opened and she looked around, then back at her friend. He sat in the driver's seat, wearing the same jeans and v-neck sweater that he'd had on when they left the dorm twelve hours earlier.

"Where are we?" she asked groggily. Carter had stopped at what looked like a roadside motel. She had no idea how long she'd been asleep, though, or what city they were even in.

"We're just outside Cleveland, Ohio, home of the Indians," he informed her.

"Indians," she muttered and rolled her eyes.

"Baseball is a fantastic sport. I don't know why you can't see that, Tessie," he replied.

"Carter, if we've had this discussion once, we've had it a thousand times," she said. "And I'm tired and hungry and frankly not in the best all-around mood after an entire day in this contraption you deem to call a vehicle. So, if you don't mind, can you tout the virtues of Babe Ruth on someone else's time please?"

"Babe Ruth was a Yankee, not an Indian," Carter informed her, completely ignoring her diatribe. She just sighed and opened the door of the Jeep to get out and stretch.

"It's getting late, so I thought we'd stop here for the night if that's okay with you," he said as he got out of the Jeep as well.

"Fine by me, as long as they have food," she answered.

"If you will please direct your attention to the greasy spoon to your left," Carter smirked as he motioned to the diner that was connected to the small motel.

"Works for me," she replied. "Now, come on, Carter. Let's go clog our arteries." The best friends linked arms and walked together towards the diner.

* * * * *

"Tatter tot casserole," Tess read off the menu. "What exactly do you suppose they put in tatter tot casserole?" She looked up from her menu to Carter, who just shrugged.

"My mom makes broccoli casserole," he offered. She just turned back to the menu.

"What're you gonna have?" she asked.

"I'm thinking the meatloaf sounds good," he replied. "You?"

She wrinkled her nose. "Not a meatloaf fan. Maybe I'll just get a cheeseburger."

"Sounds like a safe bet," he nodded.

"So, you know, you really should have woken me up to drive," Tess said, laying the menu aside as they waited for the waitress to return.

"It was no big deal. You have a lot on your mind. I figured you could use the rest. Besides," he added, "I slept like the dead last night. I'm still a little wired."

"That's funny, I feel like I didn't sleep at all," she replied. "I mean, I was in the bed for a good eight hours, but I woke up feeling like I'd gotten no sleep."

"You're just worried about all of this stuff. It's probably perfectly normal. Maybe you should take a sleeping pill tonight or something," he said.

"Yeah," she nodded, "maybe you're right."

"So, we gonna try and get an early start tomorrow?" he asked.

"I'd like to," she nodded.

"Cool, well you order the meatloaf for me when she comes back. I'm gonna head over to the front desk and get us a room." Tess nodded and watched him go.

After the waitress had come back to take their orders, Tess sat waiting for Carter to return. Her mind was in a million places. All she could think of was the little scraps of information that she was following. When she stopped to think about it, it really wasn't much to go on. It was really kind of dumb for her to go all the way across the country based simply on the fact that she was born in Albuquerque. Her parents would definitely have a fit if they knew what she was up to.

Still, it was the only option. She wasn't sure how, but she knew that finding her mother and father was the key to unlocking the mystery that had always surrounded her in her life. Though she'd never really revealed it to anyone, even Carter, strange things had been happening to her for her entire life. She'd ignored it at first, then dismissed it, and finally denied it. That had seemed to work for a while. But, in the past year, the occurrences had been returning, and with more and more frequency. Just like the dreams she remembered that didn't seem to be her own. It was just odd things like that which she couldn't quite explain, but she knew they were not normal.

Tess stared down at the pattern of the laminated tabletop. Tiny gold flecks covered the dingy white surface in random disarray. She moved

her fingers over the table, swirling over the slick texture with her fingertip. A small scar in the laminate caught her eye and she moved her hand to it, brushing her finger over the little ding. To her amazement, when she moved her fingers back, the scratch was gone, disappeared. It was like it had never existed. But, she'd just seen it, it had just been right there under her finger . . .

"Something wrong?" Carter asked as he rejoined her, only to see his friend looking down at the table in puzzlement.

"Hmm?" She looked up at Carter and quickly shook her head. "No, nothing," she said quickly. "I ordered your meatloaf a few minutes ago."

He sat back down across from her, saying, "Thanks." She still looked a little . . . freaked. That was the only word he could think of to describe it. "Tessie, are you sure you're okay? You look weird."

"I'm fine, really," she assured him. "I'm just hungry, that's all. And I think you were right about me being nervous and not sleeping because of everything that's been going on. I think I'll go find a drugstore and get some over the counter sleeping pills after we eat."

He nodded. "Might be a good idea." He still didn't look convinced, though. He'd never seen his best friend act this way and, sleep or no sleep, it was very strange. "Tess, are you sure?"

She looked up at her lifelong friend and sighed. Maybe she should tell him what was going on. After all, if it had anything to do with her birth parents, he was sure to find out soon enough. "Well . . ." she began.

"Who had the cheeseburger?" the waitress interrupted.

Tess looked up and smiled slightly. "That'd be me," she responded. She decided that this conversation would have to wait for another time.

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"Sorry they only had one bed," Carter said as he sat on the edge of the double bed and removed his shoes.

"It's okay, it's not like we haven't slept in the same bed before," she replied.

"Well, not since we were about twelve," he said.

She turned towards him from the chair and smirked. "You planning on making a pass or something, Carter?"

He returned the smirk. "Not in this lifetime, Tessie," he replied.

She giggled. "Good. Now that we have that settled." She walked over to the bed and pulled back the covers on the side opposite him. "I think I'm gonna turn in. I'm beat."

"Did you take the sleeping pill?" he asked.

"Yeah, I took it while you were brushing your teeth," she told him.

"Good, maybe that will help. You need to get some rest."

She smiled and nodded. That was just like Carter, always looking out for her. He was like the big brother she'd never had; though in actuality she was two months older than he was. Still, he'd always been her protector. She was definitely glad to have him by her side on this trip. She felt like, emotionally anyway, she needed all the protection she could get.

"Sleep tight, Tessie," Carter said to her as he lay down on the other side of the bed and reached over to flip off the lamp.

"Good night," she said. The room was engulfed in darkness as she turned off the other lamp. She laid her head back down and listened to the sound of Carter's breathing beside her. Before she knew it, she was drifting off.

* * * * *

"Oh Tess . . ." he moaned as his lips ravaged hers. She opened her mouth wider and felt his tongue slide against her own. His hands traveled up her sides, under her T-shirt, and she felt a shiver run through her at his touch on her bare skin. "I've wanted to do this for so long . . . so long," he rasped as their hungry kisses continued.

They were on the bed, under the covers, and so close that she couldn't tell where he ended and she began. His hands were everywhere. His lips were soft but insistent against her own. Their touches were needy and determined, but the passion between them was definitely shared. That was very obvious . . . they both wanted this very much.

But this was Carter. What was she doing?

Her eyes widened as she watched, transfixed by the scene playing out before her eyes. She couldn't tell how, but she could see the whole thing. And not only him, she could even see herself. She was watching this take place, but she was also participating. Though she couldn't for the life of her explain it, there it was. The two bodies before her moved even closer, as if trying to merge into one. All she could do was stare.

"Tess . . . I love you . . . God, Tess . . ." she heard Carter say as he kissed her neck. She, the she that she watched, arched her neck and moaned an indeterminate response to his lips and his words.

'This is too weird,' she thought. 'What in the hell is going on?' Her head was spinning out of control. She didn't know how she knew, but this was not her dream. This was Carter's dream. Again she had entered his mind, just like the night before. But, he was dreaming about her, about them? She felt like watching this was an invasion of his privacy. Even if the dream did involve her, it was obviously something she was never meant to see.

'Wake up,' she told herself. 'Wake up, Tess. Wake up! Wake up!' she was yelling in her mind, screaming at herself to stop this, to stop watching. She needed to leave; she needed to get back to reality so that she could sort this all out.

"Tessie? Tess, wake up!" she heard then. It was Carter, but his voice was closer now. It wasn't the slightly distant echo that it had been in the dream. This was the real Carter and he had obviously woken up. She scanned her surroundings and saw nothing but blackness. His dream had stopped. "Tess, it's just a dream," she heard him say then and she struggled to open her eyes.

"Carter?" she mumbled through the first haze of wakefulness.

"Yeah, you were dreaming," he said. "You kept yelling something, but I couldn't understand what you were saying."

She opened her eyes fully and saw her best friend staring down at her with concern. She blinked, then sat up. "I'm fine, just a weird dream," she replied quickly.

"Are you sure? Everything's okay?" he asked.

"Yeah," she nodded. "Fine." Why did she suddenly feel so awkward around him?

"Tessie . . . look at me," he said. She forced her gaze from her hands up to his face. She saw no lust there, only worry. Had she been wrong about the dream being his?

"Were you asleep? Did I wake you?" she asked then.

It was now his turn to turn away. His face reddened just slightly, not enough that she would have picked up on it normally, but enough to confirm her suspicions. "Yeah, um, I was asleep," he replied.

"What was your dream about?" she asked.

He looked up in surprise, unsure of what to say but knowing that whatever he told her it would be anything but the truth. "Um . . . nothing, I don't remember. What about yours?"

She looked at him for a second, then replied, "Same, can't remember."

"Hmm, weird," he said.

"Yeah," she replied.

"Well, we should probably try and, um . . ."

"Go back to sleep," she finished.

He nodded. "Yeah."

"Okay, goodnight," she said to him.

He cleared his throat, then lay back down facing the opposite

direction. "Yeah, goodnight," he replied.

Tess lay there for a long time staring at the red display of the clock. She hoped that morning got there soon, because there was no way she was going back to sleep . . . not on this night.

* * * * *

"Turn left up here and that'll take us back to the highway," Carter said. He was sitting on the passenger's side the next morning as they left the motel in Cleveland. Despite the lack of sleep the previous night, Tess had insisted on driving that morning.

"How far do you think we'll get today?" she asked him as she reached to fiddle with the radio while he examined the map.

"Um, well judging by the time we made yesterday, I'd say that we should get at least to Missouri, maybe Oklahoma if we drive late."

"So then we should be in New Mexico tomorrow?" she asked.

"Yeah, definitely by tomorrow evening at least," he replied.

"That's good, I'm anxious to get there," she said.

"I'm sure you are," he answered. He turned to look at her and added, "It'll all work out, Tessie, I just have a feeling."

She smiled at him, then turned back to the road. "Funny, so do I."

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file.